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CHRISTIAN VOCATION AND DAILY WORK

John Oliver Nelson

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COVER: A drawing by Chester Tanaka.

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Editorial

The New Communist Line

The astonishing new twist in Soviet policy is not so easy to interpret or to evaluate as many would have us think. Putting aside the controversy touched off by the *Life* article about Mr. Dulles—which he apparently regrets having been party to—we need to look closely at what has been going on in the Kremlin for some time. Odd as it all seems, it is not impossible to fit these developments into a pattern—at least a hypothetical pattern.

The first step, we would suggest, is to note that the familiar changes in the communist “line” are not necessarily inconsistent at all. The more fixed and dogmatically fortified the purposes of a government—or any other institution—actually are, the more readily may policies be altered from time to time in order to meet exigencies as they arise. It is of the essence of communism that it embodies what its devotees call “historical thinking.” The historical situation is continually changing, and a more flexible philosophy would tend to change with it. But if the official philosophy, or ideology, is rigid a marked change in the political, social, or cultural situation must be met by a policy change.

Thus it is quite possible for the Kremlin to rationalize a major change in policy by pointing to a new condition which calls for new measures if the *unchanging goals* are to be kept in view. “If Lenin were living today,” the argument runs, “he would surely have so di-

rected.” This is really an application of the “existentialist” principle of which we in the West have heard so much.

Incidentally, the significance of this application of “historical thinking” in Communist China can scarcely be exaggerated, for it furnishes a ready antidote for the proverbial loss of “face” which accompanies a reversal of position. A leader need not even hint that he has been wrong; he need only “explain” that everything is different now. Since it is a function of communist leadership to interpret both situation and doctrine, the men in power can do an indeterminate amount of accommodating without loss of prestige.

Secondly, the apparent shift in emphasis from military force to political and economic penetration presents neither mystery nor ground for assuming any profound change in ultimate purpose. What else should we expect in the light of the virtual atomic stalemate at which we have arrived? Why should military risks be taken by a power which has gained so many objectives by avoiding military involvement and employing all the known weapons of *cold warfare*? There never was any reason to assume that in Soviet reasoning “coexistence” as a policy was anything other than an application of the orthodox communist assumption that capitalism contains the seeds of its own destruction.

The real issue for the West, therefore, would seem to be whether or not we are ready to do a bit of his-

torical thinking ourselves and make the indicated changes in our own policy. It would be foolhardy to abandon defense, but the struggle ahead is likely to be a political and economic war in which the prize to be won is the mind of the East—and of the captive and “neutralist” nations in the West.

“Foreign Aid”

A prime necessity for the framing of a viable foreign policy vis-à-vis the communist world is a rethinking of the whole matter of “foreign aid.” Peter Drucker, a keen analyst, writing in the *Atlantic* for April, turns a searchlight on our present program. “The very fact,” he says, “that it was a program of ‘foreign aid’ made Congress perpetually suspicious, and built up a growing opposition to ‘giveaways’ throughout the country. Moreover, once the first emergency was past, this emphasis on ‘aid’ was bound to breed dissatisfaction and suspicion abroad.” Nobody cares to look like a “perennial beggar,” and, besides, there is always the fear of a “hidden motive” behind the apparent generosity. Moreover, there has been real ground for uneasiness, for “a foreign policy that is purely selfish is indeed a mean policy, and will come to a mean end.”

Meanwhile, the narrow objectives of foreign aid have been outmoded: the other nations are becoming less dependent on America, while we are increasingly dependent economically on the outside world.

The English economist, Barbara Ward, in a recent article in the *New York Times* put her finger on an-

other serious flaw: “In numberless debates in Congress, in speeches without end to Western electorates, in commentaries and articles, one theme emerges above all—that giving aid to backward areas is a painful necessity made inevitable only because they must be kept out of the Communist camp.” Irony is added to ineptitude when “the same legislators who have grimly consented in pure self-interest to provide perhaps half the necessary funds denounce the recipient peoples as ungrateful scoundrels who show no due appreciation of the magnificent generosity shown them (in strict preservation of Western skins).”

In sharp contrast is the Soviet policy of which Hans Morgenthau of the University of Chicago has said (*New Republic*, March 26): “The Russian initiative owes nothing to our example, but everything to the awareness that the Cold War of position has changed to one of movement and maneuver, requiring new methods on all levels of policy. Everywhere in Asia and the Middle East the Soviet Union has completely, one might even say ruthlessly, subordinated foreign aid to the requirements of high political policy.”

We need an equivalent degree of realism. But, of course, the matter does not end here. That eminent political realist, Walter Lippmann, notes the “urgency of obvious self-interest” in this crucial issue, but points to a “deeper moral obligation”: “With less than 10 per cent of the non-Communist world’s population, and only 8 per cent of its area, the United States is consuming

more than half of the non-Communist world's supply of such fundamental materials as petroleum, rubber, iron ore, manganese and zinc. In 1950, we were consuming 10 per cent more materials than we produced; in another twenty-five years the percentage will be far greater."

For this, says Mr. Lippmann, we owe some return to the underdeveloped regions of the world.

Mr. Pew's Report

There is something pathetic in the document prepared and published by Mr. J. Howard Pew which bears the title "The Chairman's Final Report to the National Lay Committee of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in America." Replete with documentary appendices—316 pages in all—it is a manifestly sincere attempt to vindicate the efforts of Mr. Pew and his Committee to guide the newly formed National Council into a socially and politically conservative course. As such, it is what its author regards as a record of failure.

What seems to us pathetic in this sober and unpretentious account is the combination of sound and laudable purposes for which the Lay Committee merited appreciation with a regrettable misreading both of the history of our times and of the gospel itself.

In resisting the tendency that had grown up in the Protestant churches to issue pronouncements which had much less than the broad base of membership support which democratic procedure presupposes the Lay Committee was on solid ground. In insisting that in relation to many

controversial matters the role of the church is that of giving guidance to the individual conscience rather than of corporate pronouncement the Committee was right.

Indeed, it is a pity that no way was found to keep Mr. Pew's large and influential Committee preoccupied with what was *right* in its program so that it would have avoided being so very *wrong* in interpreting the genius of Protestant Christianity. It seems to have had no awareness of the essentially radical thrust of Christianity, and of the prophetic tradition from which it flowered—an inheritance of the Christian Church which makes it inevitably a critic of the society in which it lives. It is one of the ironies of history that the institution founded by Jesus, who was crucified for his prophetic ardor, should be found in our time sheltering a stolid and complacent conservatism that is alien to the New Testament.

That the Lay Committee was bent on setting the course of the great new ecumenical body which had come into being—not through individual influence but as a "collective" force—many people feared, but could not be sure. The published report leaves no doubt about it. Mr. Pew puts it this way:

How did it happen that the hopes and aspirations expressed by the Planning Committee and concurred in by the Chairman and the members of the Lay Committee failed so utterly of accomplishment? This much is certain—with few exceptions, the members of the Lay Committee had agreed to serve only because they had been assured that the new National Council would avoid the political in-

volvements and controversies which had characterized the activities of the old Federal Council of Churches which was now superseded.

The misconception here is profound. The Committee seemed unable to imagine that laymen as such would not necessarily think in the same pattern as those particular laymen who happen to be successful—some of them opulent—businessmen. The only way they could account for the rejection of an extremely conservative leadership was to imagine a clerical conspiracy to capture or intimidate the lay mind.

This is strange, very strange, for the businessmen are continually lamenting the “welfare” trend in contemporary political thought which keeps showing itself at the polls—where the voters are nearly all laymen!

An even more grievous misconception is that revealed in the Committee's narrow definition of the scope of the gospel and of the role of the church. Some of us take very seriously the admonition of these laymen that an official church body should shun pronouncements that have not been weighed by the conscience of the membership. But a very different issue is raised by the following statement found in the Committee's proceedings:

“Our Committee believes that the National Council of the Churches impairs its ability to meet its prime responsibility when, sitting in judgment

on current secular affairs, it becomes involved in economic or political controversy having no moral or ethical content, promoting division where unity of purpose should obtain, nor do we believe that the National Council has a mandate to engage in such activities.”

This divorcement of religion from political, social, and economic matters is the very essence of secularism. It runs sharply counter to the New Testament.

The Lay Committee should be remembered for its plodding sincerity—but also for its inability to read, as Jesus put it, the “signs of the times,” in the light of the gospel.

In This Issue

No more vital topic has engaged the attention of church people in recent years than that of Christian vocation—the impact of Christian faith and teaching upon one's daily work. It is an old idea with new and broad implications.

We invited Professor John Oliver Nelson to discuss the subject in a major article. Copies of his manuscript were sent to persons representing a variety of occupations, with the request that they write brief commentaries pointing up the discussion by reference to their own vocations.

The results are presented this month in the hope that they will stimulate thought—and perhaps inspire some communications from our readers.

Christian Vocation and Daily Work

By John Oliver Nelson

CURIOUS CHRISTIAN: Worker in America, how goes it these days with you?

WORKER: Never had it so good! Full employment, higher wages than I ever dreamed of, shorter hours, pleasanter surroundings, vacations, old-age security. I haven't a complaint.

CURIOUS CHRISTIAN: Tell me this: has your religion anything to do with your work?

WORKER: Religion? Never thought about it. Never mix it with business, they say. Yes, I go to church—and I hear about four million Americans are joining every year. Never hurt anybody to go to church, I say. I'm good to my family and fair to everybody. But religion doesn't need to interfere with work. Part of life is religion and part of life is work on the job, and you get only trouble if you try mixing the two.

CURIOUS CHRISTIAN: But what goals are you working for?

WORKER: Well, that's pretty simple. I want my family to have everything the neighbors have, no more but no less. I want a late-model car, color TV, nice house and three square meals a day, good vacation, a little money in the bank, Blue Cross, Blue Shield, a pension to add to my social security, and—well, that's about the story.

CURIOUS CHRISTIAN: Do you ever stop to think about what it all means, this job and life of yours, in the Christian scheme of things?

WORKER: Stopping and thinking, I guess, just aren't in my line. You get wondering about things and you start to worry. Next thing you know, you've got ulcers, or you start arguing with men at the plant and find yourself out of a job. And then where are you? . . .

This does constitute the great question: Where are you without a job today?

The main problems which workers think they face are those which begin only when they stop working. For work life in America is for millions an end in itself, a whole career, a religion and a livelihood and an

Dr. Nelson is director of religious field work and professor of Christian vocation at the Divinity School of Yale University.

absorbing, competitive preoccupation.

Outward aspects of "success" and work are describable in familiar terms. We have by far the highest level of employment in our history. Sales totals of consumer goods overtop any that have ever been conceived. Wages go higher yearly. Working conditions—with better facilities, shorter hours, and a variety of fringe benefits—are utopian as compared with those of any previous epoch or any other country. Even though the steady, relentless march of automation puts many a worker out of his job, everyone expects that the very consumptive capacity of the new machines will continue to provide both new jobs and boundless quantities of new products for everybody. Viewed as a whole, work in America, and particularly the goods it buys, would seem to be genuinely satisfying.

But After Work

In fact it may appear that the only problems of the worker are those of *not-work*—the extent to which he is not employed in his occupation. In union-management battles the issue of job security is absolutely central: the employee wants guarantees against slack periods (such as the guaranteed annual wage), while the employer wants the right to cut off workers as soon as there is a threat to his own security in making a profit. Implicit in every job these days is the age-old fear as to how terminable it is, how firmly it staves off unemployment.

This problem of not-work also

crops up in workers' difficulties about leisure and about retirement. Everyone has more days off. Vacations go with jobs which never carried such a privilege before. The work week takes fewer and fewer hours.

But the average worker is ill-prepared to use this new not-work time which he now has. Even with the tremendous rise of spectator sports, absorption with television and drive-in theaters, and the thronging of beaches, golf-links, and pools, the weekend becomes increasingly a "lost weekend" as boredom and alcoholism take their toll. Domestic tragedies reported in the papers, climaxes of divorce cases, periods of greatest incidence of juvenile delinquency, are usually linked with our constantly extended leisure time. The man or woman who is happy enough at work still does not know how to deal with time-off. Leisure has crept up on us without our ever having defined it or made spiritual reckoning with it. Instead of "leisure" being the whole web of life itself, the creative career within which our occupation happens to be a part, it is just *time-off-from-work*. It is that precious commodity for which we haggle and go on strike, yet do not know how to handle once we have it. In its psychological usefulness, leisure must also provide the adventure and risk which are lacking in much of our occupational life. Even now it is the area in which we vent the hostilities and aggressions—though they are often unexpressed and unrealized—which we build up within our occupational hours.

Retirement

Along with weekly or annual leisure, the problem of retirement is one of the nettling factors for today's worker. Here, too, is a privilege for which we bargain and save up, but which (as every study shows) millions frankly or secretly dread and push off. "After old J. W. retired at the bank he was a pitiful sight—always wandering back to the office looking into things, never knowing what to do with himself, getting more difficult and cranky every year because he had nothing to live for."

Manual worker, clerical and service worker, and professional person are in the same plight here as not-work looms up in old age. One great national corporation stoutly requires that before any employee retires, he must choose and develop a hobby—and he is provided with a long list of such activities, and given free training in each of them for months before his actual retirement date. True, this company may be concerned also about the leisure time of its workers during their years of employment—though possibly grateful in some ways that "their job is their whole life." But the problem of not-work comes most imminently to view for personnel advisers, as for all of us, on the eve of our launching out into what seem the becalmed waters of retirement.

Produce Contentedly

While the main fears and difficulties of modern work arise in relation to time-off, there goes on an amazing movement to make work itself more enjoyable and produc-

tive. Thus the most notable psychological or even spiritual phenomenon in occupational life today is doubtless the movement known as "human relations in industry." Even its history, not to mention its solid achievements now from year to year, is a fascinating area for exploration.

Very early in this century, time-motion studies conducted by management opened up exciting possibilities of so adapting work conditions to the worker that he would achieve the maximum of productivity. This exploration began in part with a desire to give employees the least bother and exertion as they went about their duties. Promoting the general happiness of human beings—has always been one of the motives—however small—that have inspired employers in such efforts. Yet no one pretends that "human relations in industry" is a largely altruistic or eleemosynary effort. It is an aspect of the inevitable and commendable thrust of industrial management to increase production.

Undignifying comparisons have constantly been made regarding this shrewd adjustment of environment to worker. At about the same time, it was discovered that cows in milk-barns could be induced to give their product more willingly and plentifully if certain kinds of music were played. Compliant hens, it was found, give forth their eggs with false hope of dawn as lights flash on at midnight in the poultry shed. In a great business office it is found that piped-in music for the first six minutes each half-hour produces the maximum output from stenographers—not five, nor seven, but six min-

utes. By using our psychological know-how, we can make workers produce more willingly, painlessly—and plentifully.

From such simple encouragement of production, it is a long way upward to actual inducements to stay at work, or to benefits secured by collective bargaining, or to a creative benevolence of employers, which is not infrequent. Work in our century has been vastly changed by insurance plans (government-sponsored or not), company clinics, snack bars, education programs, employee suggestion-box prizes, coffee breaks, lounges and swimming pools, bonuses and length-of-service awards. Seniority plans in thousands of plants make virtue of just staying with the company: the amount of wages, for example, often depends less upon expertness or initiative than upon merely being there a long time.

A Continuing Revolution

All this attention focussed on the worker has not only raised production to astral totals, and bound men and women to their jobs. It has made work less burdensome and tiring, less grueling physically, less prolonged by day and week and year. "Human relations in industry," which *Time* called several years ago "the major achievement of capitalism in mid-twentieth century," has made industrial workers more contented with duller jobs than ever before in history.

Someone will object that we oversimplify if we suggest that the work patterns of assembly-line industry apply also to the vastly wider area

of all occupational life in America. What, you may ask, about professional workers or farmers or soldiers, and the constantly increasing proportion of the population engaged in service occupations—shopkeepers, garage men, salesmen, etc.?

The fact is, that work in every one of these fields has been radically changed by the growing power of the industrial structure. Needs of us all are now firmly built—largely by advertising as the handmaid of consumer-goods industry—around the products of automation and corporate manufacturing. Industrial workers' pay and hours, their attitude toward their tasks, their place in the hierarchy of occupations—all have been directly or subtly determined by the standards set in industry. The "industrial revolution" about which we studied in school is emphatically still "revolving," to effect even further changes in our way of life.

Again, Haunting Questions

Standing back from this busy scene of modern work, we may well rephrase some of the queries the "curious Christian" asked as we began. What relation does exist between "the good life" of consumer goods and four-color advertisements and "the good life" of the New Testament? How many Christians stay aboard the cultural escalator until it reaches the place where luxuries become necessities of the American standard of living? Might not daily work under the Soviets, gullibly and tragically carried on for the ideal of the classless society or the dictatorship of the proletariat, be really more "religious" than the devotion

of many Americans to goals no higher than the paycheck or added personal possessions? Most important of all: Does the all-demanding occupation of millions nowadays become actually *preoccupation* so far as worship of God is concerned—unwittingly placing idols of success and comfort and security where Christian faith says only God should be?

Such questions are usually thrust impatiently aside in the fast-moving parade of American occupational life. Millions of workers will swear that their “contentment” is “as advertised”: to suggest that they are not completely satisfied with the system as it is invites the cry of subversion or “foreign ideologies.” “Positive thinking” is enthusiastic about the main trends in American work just as it stands. Political promises that national income and work will stay as they are get the votes. Teams of industrialists are sent by the State Department to dozens of countries overseas, to tell them how we do it. “Success” is written heavily over the whole picture. None of us can stand back and declare himself no part of the whole movement.

The devotee of things-as-they-are in modern work usually suspects that any religious criticism arises from a killjoy standpoint which frowns upon everyone’s having added pleasure and satisfaction in life. True, some claimants do insist that, without Puritan asceticism or Kierkegaardian *Angst*, life is un-Christian. “If it’s fun it can’t be good!” Biblical literalists even point out that Adam’s curse requires all his descendants to toil and sweat, strug-

gling all their days with thorns and thistles. But such disapproving judgments when directed to the easier situation of modern work, and the luxuries earned by it, represent a tiny fraction of the religious opinion among us. These are obviously prim and captious judgments.

What seems to be a prophetic criticism of American work life, however, arises from the very core of Christian faith. For the first essential, to a Christian, is this: *no matter how contented men and women may be in their daily existence, it is insignificant unless it is consciously related to worship of the true God.* If “secularism” is defined as “life lived without acknowledgment of God,” then the Christian objection to much modern work is that *it is secularist.*

A Restless Spirit

From this angle the Christian observer finds the well paid but essentially pagan worker buying “contentment” at the cost of the higher satisfaction of discovering and exploring his relation with his Maker. St. Augustine prayed: “Thou hast made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in thee.” Despite the complacency and comfort of a host of workers in America, are there evidences of this sort of restlessness of heart?

Already we have suggested that in leisure millions must today find the risk and adventure now lacking in their occupation. Many an assembly-line worker, after a pay raise, finds that he is somehow still unfulfilled but cannot discover why: he begins to negotiate or strike for a

yet higher pay raise—while all the time his dissatisfaction is a spiritual one, his restlessness the cosmic homelessness described by Augustine.

There are abundant evidences—sometimes in terrifying volume—of this inarticulate complaint against the poverty of life. Perceptive commentators agree that this is “the age of anxiety”—when the inwardly troubled, wistful person is the average. The millions are described today as “the lonely crowd”—none more so than a throng of industrial workers pouring out of a vast, glistening plant to drive off in their smooth new cars. Again, “we are the hollow men” is a phrase to which multitudes nod assent. Modern novels reflect biting (and interminably) the emptiness of our work life, as “hucksters” in advertising, as “the man in the gray flannel suit,” as soldiers “from here to eternity,” farmers amid “grapes of wrath,” or wry workers living “life in a putty-knife factory”! Drama and poetry are even more mordantly eloquent about this shadowed side of our modern “full employment.”

Alongside these literary analyses, there are plenty of other indications. Contradicting the “no complaint” of the well paid worker, is an almost audible complaint of his body and mind. Part of “having everything,” for modern men and women, is having also an unprecedented record of ulcers, hypertension, and heart difficulty—troubles caused mostly by worry and fear. Everywhere aspirin and sedatives are reported to be setting new sales records. Alcoholism mounts noisily to new heights in city, suburb, and

country. Psychoanalysts are besieged with thousands of troubled would-be patients, most of them holders of “good jobs.” Religionists who promise relaxation of nerves and power to get hold of oneself are carried along in a swirl of popularity.

To face these facts is to confront these necessary conclusions: All is decidedly *not* well in modern work life. Millions of people in America do *not* find contentment in their occupation, painless and lucrative though it may be. Much work life in America *does* set its goals and carry along its program without any glimmer of recognition that God is, or that he has a continuing purpose for men and women in his world.

Defining “Vocation”

There is widespread and growing realization in the church today that the factor thus tragically missing in everyday work bears a strong resemblance to a neglected New Testament claim known as Christian vocation. Some Christians have even begun to imagine that this doctrine may be resorted to like the contrived *deus ex machina* which in Greek drama was suddenly thrust out from backstage to solve the plot. There is no panacea, for modern work or for the church, in just announcing this classic Christian truth of Christian vocation. But somewhere in its true meaning there may be new hope and new strategy for our church and our culture.

How define “vocation”—that vocal, direct mandate to do and be—as it appeared in Judaeo-Christian experience and expression? Traditionally it referred to three rather

different sorts of relationship inaugurated by God and accepted by men. One is that vocation is *a call to a special mission*. The *qahal* of the Old Testament was usually a divine summons to an individual to "get thee up quickly and" accomplish a task—or even a summons to a nation, like Israel, that it should tackle such an assignment. Similarly, the *klesis* of the New Testament was a spiritual shout, a call, a bidding, to set about some particular piece of work.

A second, more specialized, meaning of "calling" or "vocation" was that current in the early church: *the summons of Christ to a life of salvation*. To "walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" (Ephesians 4:1) has to do with that great calling which is shared by all Christians as they accept the gospel.

The third accepted sense in which Christians have understood "calling" is as a *bidding to a particular occupation and status* in society—the two having been synonymous in New Testament times. Paul, in I Corinthians 7:20, bids people stay in the same occupation in which they started out. This job, he says, is their vocation.

Speaking to the dilemmas and uncertainties of modern life, the fresh relevance of Christian vocation appears in all three of these historic ways. Certainly our primary need is to accept the summons of Christ in the gospel: unless we do this, we are not interested in anything more. But immediately this response means action, a "get thee up," a specific task among men, witnessing to our commitment. And it is in this par-

ticular task that God continues to call us to fulfill our whole calling as Christians. In other words, "vocation" is by no means a synonym for "occupation," as it often seems to be in everyday usage. Rather, Christian vocation is the response of our whole life—job, family relationship, leisure—to the intention of God for our lives as we discover it.

Reclaiming Revolution

This claim that there is a divine will for every human being—not just the clergy or others in "orders"—has been revolutionary in any age when it has been taken seriously. The New Testament, knowing nothing of clergy-versus-laity distinctions such as we bandy about today, speaks only of people called of God, who are given power in that calling. When the Reformation reclaimed this truth—and incidentally set the whole basis for the meaning of work in modern society—here again Christian vocation was applied excitingly to all, men and women, ministers and laymen, learned and ignorant, with epochal results.

Yet now, again, so rare is the real comprehension of Christian vocation that even for church people anyone who has "a call of God" must surely be earmarked for the professional ministry! Meanwhile the term *vocation* itself has been eviscerated. Rather than the high summons of God set forth in the New Testament, it is now the commodity dealt with by "vocational guidance" which is almost wholly secular in its orientation. Indeed, since the advent of "vocational training," the high term has come to denote the least distin-

guished sort of manual activity. "George, your I.Q. does not justify your taking the pre-college course, and I regret to say that you will have to prepare for a vocation"! The term has gone far downhill since it dwelt in the vocabulary of St. Paul.

Accordingly, any effort to renew and re-live Christian vocation today means much more than just seeking to "Christianize our job." It starts with commitment of whole selves to God, specifically *not* excepting occupational life. There may follow then a realization of what the Incarnation means: God revealed in a manger birth and in a life among laymen, making clear his will that the meanest and most ordinary aspects of life are made holy in Christ.

Linking up our individual calling (as laymen or ministers) with the appointed mission of the whole people of God, Christian vocation also involves our being part of the church. We are "called" to the fellowship of believers, commissioned to "go into all the world" to witness.

Obviously, our reclaiming of Christian vocation in this generation is a far greater task than just "applying Christian principles to the daily job"—even though this may be the area which most needs such inclusion just now. You cannot get a lot of half-committed Christians to reassess their bread-winning job in godly terms. They will never be concerned enough to do this! Instead, Christian vocation in its full meaning binds together conversion, witness, stewardship, social outreach, churchmanship, and a dozen other aspects of the Christian's experience,

in an approach to wholeness in the believer. Upon two main efforts it particularly depends: First it involves deepening people's conversion to Christ, which in many cases has been dulled or vitiated as he has been shut out of their daily work. The other necessity is that workers be shown actual ways by which job life can become part of their whole Christian vocation in the gospel.

For and by Laymen

Here is where the largest task lies for the American churches. For evangelism-through-vocation is a task for laymen—and it is hard to find laymen who are converted deeply enough to care about it. Can the newly emergent laymen's movements in the church take up this challenge?

Once laymen find their vocation in this new—and New Testament—perspective, the process may begin. For example, only a plumber can suggest to a plumber how Christian commitment may be extended to include their job. What are the actual ethical dilemmas a plumber faces—as to materials used, hours counted for pay, relations to helpers and customers and competitors, honesty in sales talks? The same sort of specialized Christian concern differentiates every other field as well. Only as engineers size up their occupational life with other engineers, nurses with nurses, janitors with janitors, doctors with doctors, farmers with farmers, can there be reality for all in their respective Christian vocations. Ministers or evangelists may inspire such workers to deal

with their problems in common, but it is only they themselves who can apply Christian principle to their own job.

To be sure, certain general questions asked in the light of Christian vocation may be applied to every occupation. For example: In your whole life, and in your job, are you doing something genuinely useful to society? Do you offer the best you have, of skill and will, in what you do? Do you treat others, on your job and off, as children of God, as persons possessing dignity? Are all aspects of your life, including your job, such that you can pray, there, about what you are doing? Self-questioning of this sort has already opened up deep exploration among men and women in various sorts of life and occupation.

Already, of course, the movement has begun. A good deal of groundwork—doctrinal, historical, sociological—is at hand. In Germany the famous Evangelical Academies, week-end conferences of Christians in the same occupational field, have set a vivid new pattern. From the Church and World center in Holland there have begun to appear in many job fields a host of trained “Wikas” (Werkers in Kristlijke Arbeid) with fresh realization of Christian vocation for daily work. In America under the prompting of the National Council of Churches’ Department of Church and Economic Life several years ago a historic conference in Buffalo on “The Christian and His Daily Work” broke new ground, and area gatherings on the same theme have since aroused wide in-

terest. Studies and experiments of the World Council of Churches, emphases in the YMCA and student Christian groups and the Laymen’s Movement for a Christian World, conferences at Parishfield and Kirkridge and a dozen other centers—these have all been signs of new vitality and vision with respect to vocation. There does seem to be some indication, also, that such concern may be expected among the fast-growing denominational organizations of men, formed since World War II in a dozen different communions, which are seeking their role in the total life of the church.

It is a rueful fact—and probably a token of our weak faith in God today—that the problems brought up in the first part of this discussion loom so large that they may seem quite to overshadow considerations suggested in the second part. Over against the culture-wide dilemma of modern work, is the ideal of Christian vocation—involving vast effort in evangelism and education—really a viable possibility? Even with ninety-five million church members in America, the task is beyond our own resources. Rather, like the few loaves and fishes to feed the multitude, or the tiny handful of apostles setting out to overturn the world, our only power is in finding the deep swift current of the divine will and giving ourselves to its strength. Approached in such a way, this movement can again be “the power of God unto salvation” for millions whose life has lost its meaning and integrity in a time of plenty.

Commentaries . . .

1. Banking

By Robert H. Marshall

In this age of automation and efficiency in industry and business, with its speedier operation and shorter work week, banking also has felt the impact. The bank employee also is under greater pressure and is in danger of losing that virtue called dedication to his work or, in the broader sense, the realization that he has a calling—a Christian vocation—which could contribute much not only to the success of his institution but also to the well-being and happiness of those with whom he comes in contact.

While all the ingredients that make up the body of a bank operation may be present, does there exist that added "something" which really gives the bank a personality? Does the voice that answers the telephone smile? Does the teller thank the depositor for his faith in the bank? Is that difficulty about the overdraft resolved in a friendly manner? How about the young couple who desperately need financial guidance? Will the lending officer approve the businessman's request for a loan when, in the officer's judgment, a larger or even smaller advance might be more constructive? Does the young man just starting his banking career receive fatherly advice from his superior concerning his outside activities?

While many of these added "somethings" actually take place daily, it may be observed that they more frequently occur through the medium of a dedicated person, one who has exposed himself to the teachings of Christ in his church and has accepted these teachings as his guide. These individuals are usually active in their church and in many civic interests. Their spare time is always available for increasing the welfare of others.

What about the added leisure time? Proper consideration must be given to recreation of the body and improvement of the mind. Time must be freely given to the family in order to foster the better things of life and to establish a Christian home. A Christian vocation also embraces the welfare of others in such groups as the Boy Scouts, never leaving out the obligation to the church; this can be paid in some measure by strengthening the hand of the minister.

The dedicated banker can, through example and precept, influence to a great extent those about him to embark on a Christian vocation in the broader aspects—association with the church and, stemming from that association, the realization that they also have a mission to perform. However, the final responsibility for the nurture and training of the individual must be placed upon the minister and the laymen of the church.

In this world of materialism,

Mr. Marshall is vice-president of the Holyoke (Mass.) National Bank and treasurer of the Council for Social Action.

where the goal of so many seems to be the acquisition of things and of financial security, and the search for

pleasure, the way can be pointed to a fuller, more satisfying life of Christian vocation.

2. Farming

By Ferris Owen

There is need for the farmer, like other men, to understand his Christian responsibility to society.

Too often the job of making a living for himself and his family has taken so much of his time and energy that he has had little left for contributing his thoughts and energy toward a larger purpose in life. Along with this struggle for his own livelihood, however, comes the satisfaction that the fruit of his labor does provide the basic essentials of life for all people. This, in itself, partly fulfills the "basic desire of man" to contribute to the well-being of society.

The following are some specific problems and difficulties for the farmer who feels keenly his Christian responsibility:

1. To manage his farm operation so that he has time to be an active member of his church and to accept his share, or a little more, of civic responsibilities.

2. To maintain an attitude of stewardship toward the soil itself and to use it in such a way as to leave it better than he found it.

3. To maintain high standards of quality and sanitation in all that he markets.

4. To recognize the opportunities for cooperating with farm groups in

solving problems of a legislative nature and of marketing and distributing farm commodities.

5. To solve the economic farm problem by long-range planning, with the purpose of creating a better standard of living for all people; not to seek immediate gain for specific groups of farmers at the risk of discouraging foreign trade, of encouraging overproduction, of creating inefficiency in production, and of losing our basic freedoms.

6. To recognize that America has a responsibility in international affairs; that other nations must have a fair chance to develop economically; and that increasing trade opportunities in all commodities, including agricultural products, are necessary to bring this about.

7. To develop a keen sense of social responsibility toward his employees whether they are full-time or migrant, and regardless of race, creed, or class.

8. To develop a proper sense of citizenship that will compel strict honesty in complying with all government programs and regulations.

9. To recognize the need of developing common goals between rural and urban groups in matters of health, education, and welfare.

10. To recognize that agriculture can and must be a full-time Christian vocation if we are to accept our responsibility as Christian people.

Mr. Owen is owner and operator of the Owen Potato Farm, Sharon Valley, Newark, Ohio.

3. Government Service

By Donald C. Stone

If you wish to select a vocation on a Christian basis, you must consider two things: your own talents and the type of service or organization which you would like to further. In other words, you match the contribution you are guided to make with your talents and abilities. Having gone through this process honestly, you should not be concerned that you have ended up managing a grocery store rather than teaching the gospel—or, within the confines of the Federal Government, that you are perfecting methods of Civil Service testing rather than backstopping our delegation to the United Nations.

It is all very well to seek government employment for the stimulation which comes from playing a part in urgent, dramatic national or international affairs, or for good pay, interesting associates, steady advancement, good working conditions, attractive leave and retirement provisions, or other particular benefits. These are all indeed "remunerations" of government work, factors which are considered by persons entering municipal, state, and national services and which have a great deal to do with a decision to spend their lives there.

But the remuneration which an

Dr. Stone, who is now president of Springfield College (Mass.), has held several important federal posts, including that of Assistant Director, Bureau of the Budget.

overwhelming majority of government employees place first on their lists, and which, in my own estimation, is the *primary* factor that brings so many capable people into the government, is the very real satisfaction of "promoting the public welfare through governmental action."

If government is to serve its citizens well, this public service motivation *must* predominate. Cooperation, not competition, is the rule in government. The individual must work for the common good, irrespective of the fact that it may be accomplished in such a way that his own name is never highlighted and his own office never expanded. I often find that the speed and success with which a problem is solved is in proportion to the extent to which persons working on it are "practicing Christians."

Intelligence and training are essential to the government, but Christian humility and a desire to serve God's purposes over those of self are the starting point. There is a special quality—possibly more accurately described as a special combination of several qualities—which is increasingly needed in government. This is something I call "Christian ingenuity" and which I define as "inventiveness driven by concern and guided by the principles which Christ enunciated."

As the multiplicity of problems with which government is faced grows, the need for this quality of

Christian ingenuity grows. A few inspired thinkers can no longer carry the nation along. A few men cannot begin to give personal attention to the many new difficulties humanity somehow manages to create and for which there is no patterned solution. The first-line employee, as well as the office director, must be concerned and ingenious and Christian.

And beyond the solution of government problems, every public employee has an opportunity to apply Christianity in his work setting, no matter how humble a position he occupies. This is, of course, true for any work which brings a person in contact with others. I think of a fine Christian woman, left a widow with

two children to raise, who went to work in the Pentagon as a file clerk. The work itself bored her, but I shall never forget the glow on her face as she described what she had been doing. By helping the younger girls with their troubles and by consciously bringing harmony into the office, she found her own life enriched and consecrated.

Policy-making or routine, at home or abroad, government service jobs offer opportunities to people of varied talents to apply their skills to human need. In the public service, the individual will find opportunities for building fellowship and good will almost limitless in their breadth and depth.

4. Homemaking

By Gertrude W. Bingham

At a time when the homemaker with a vocation is most needed in our civilization, woman is being subjected to stresses and strains which tend to scatter her energy and to dissipate her spiritual resources. The basic function of the homemaker is indicated in the word itself, making a home wherever she may be situated, under any circumstances surrounding her. This includes the mechanics of housekeeping (as monotonous as any assembly line job), the rearing of children to be the kind of adults needed in our con-

fused world, and the maintaining of a basic relationship with her husband encompassing love, companionship, and the management of the home. In addition to this, many homemakers today are working outside the home.

The underlying purpose of the home is to provide a secure place for the upbringing of children and this area is one in which Christian vocation in its biblical sense is of prime importance. The future of the world, however trite the phrase seems, is dependent on the spiritual outlook of the next generation. In this field, the homemaker has to combat the materialistic trend of this era: the influence of the automobile, television, motion pictures,

Mrs. Bingham, herself a homemaker, is active in civic and religious affairs. She is a member of the Council for Social Action.

the emphasis laid on the latest fad in clothes and entertainment. She must teach her child to put all these into their proper perspective, to put the emphasis on the spiritual rather than the material side of living. Children must learn the eternal values at home if they are to evaluate correctly the material competition they will meet in the world outside of the home. It takes a woman with a true Christian vocation to create such an atmosphere in the family that the "cultural escalator" does not lead the members of the household away from basic integrity and the will to think for oneself and to act as one believes is right.

The necessity to contribute to the family income, faced by many homemakers, is also a force in disrupting the homemaker's vocation. She may well carry her spiritual integrity out into the business world with her and that world will be the better for it. However, that which the world gains her home loses, for she is the core about which the life of the home rotates.

Even when her activities are confined to the family, her time and energies are dissipated in a score of ways unknown to our grandmothers in spite of their greater absorption in physical duties. Taxying the children to school, to the pediatrician, and the orthodontist, being a Den Mother or leading a Girl Scout troop—all these are time consuming and leave too little opportunity for reinforcing the inner spiritual life. The greatest need for the homemaker today is a "quiet moment," a time to consider the

things which are spiritual and the things which are temporal, and to assign to them their proper levels in her life; a time to allow the streams of inspiration to refill the well of spiritual serenity and to deepen and strengthen her sense of vocation.

A homemaker never contemplates complete retirement from her work as does her husband, but the work load lightens as the children grow up and leave home. It is then that she has more time to devote to her responsibilities as a church member and to the work of her denomination. The woman whose life has not been undergirded with vocational inspiration is at a loss at this time. Bridge and fashion shows may fill the spare hours but they can never satisfy the deep need for spiritual replenishment. It is to the homemaker whose children are of high school age or over that we must turn for leadership in religious education, in social action, in our state and national affairs, and in interdenominational work. The need for vocationally motivated people in these fields is great, the potentialities limitless and inspiring. The wisdom and experience gained through years of developing the spirit of Christian living in the home can thus be given wider scope.

The homemaker carries in the hollow of her hand the spirit of true vocation. It is hers to cherish, hers to develop, and hers to pass on through her family, her friends, her denomination, and her community to her nation and the world.

5. Law

By Harold C. Kropf

It was quite evident that the young lady who presented herself at my office had summoned all her courage in deciding to obtain a divorce. Anger, frustration, defeat, and some measure of shame were manifested as her story unfolded. The mother of two children, she and her husband had found most of their ten years of married life to be happy years. However, over the past twelve to eighteen months a noticeable change in the family relationship had taken place. The husband no longer spent his evenings at home, and within the week preceding her visit to my office evidence of his unfaithfulness had come to her attention. When questioned about it, he finally admitted his guilt. Hence the appointment with a lawyer.

One possible course of action for him would have been to draft the necessary papers, file them in the court, and proceed with whatever steps were legally required to the end that his client might obtain a divorce. The legal grounds were present. The necessary evidence in the form of testimony was available. In due time a divorce would be granted.

Another course of action was taken, however; and today, some twelve years later, this marriage which had been headed for the rocks is happier than ever before.

Mr. Kropf is senior partner of the law firm of Kropf, Lindamood and Howells, Orrville, Ohio.

It seems to me that the application of Christian faith and standards of action spelled the difference between a broken home and a happy one.

Many questions were asked of this young mother in an effort to find the cause of the marriage breakdown. Both the wife and the husband were members of a church but soon after their marriage they had started drifting away so that for the past five years they had not even belonged to the large group of Christmas and Easter Sunday Christians. Associations had been made over the years with others of their age who likewise had no time for the church. Sundays and week nights were filled with a round of activities in which they were constantly faced with temptations giving rise to moral confusion — sadly mistaking immediate pleasures for those things which bring lasting happiness. In the process they were forging shackles for their own wearing. To break these was the job at hand.

A series of conferences was set up. I immediately arranged to bring into the picture the pastor of the church which had been long forgotten. (This was followed by separate conferences with the wife and husband and finally a conference attended by them and the minister and lawyer.) The factor of forgiveness was essential, but once this had been obtained the broken marriage was on the mend. It was pointed out to these young people that new asso-

ciations, within the church family, would have to be made. Practices in the home that were God-centered and active participation by each member of the family in the program of the church were also recommended as highly important if they really wanted their marriage to work. Activities engaged in by the family as a unit were likewise suggested as being vitally important in the rehabilitation process. It worked.

Today the members of this family are making a splendid contribution to the spiritual life of their church, and in their relations with neighbors and friends are witnessing to a strong Christian faith. As the lawyer

in the case I needed special help and the minister very adequately filled that need.

This is but one of many such cases. I am, therefore, fully persuaded that if serving God and one's "neighbors" is held paramount, new concepts of vocation will develop. Such a view of our "on-the-job daily activity" precludes any idea of superiority, regardless of the vocation we may have. The dignity of all necessary work will be recognized. Right personal relationships will follow. It will bring new meaning to life. If God's purpose for us is the establishment of his kingdom on earth, then we must use our vocation as a means of serving him.

6. Merchandising

By Wallace C. Speers

The practicality of the use of Christianity as a catalytic agent in business arises for me from a conviction achieved by study and experience that there is a pattern of workability for industry, commerce, government, or any form of human activity contained in the laws of God for human conduct.

I have also a strong conviction that mankind is entering upon an age in which the spirit must be in charge "or else." The spirit is fundamentally love—not silly sentimentalism or emotion, but rather those aspects of love which boil down to

mutual responsibility. The burning question in the world today is what quality and volume of love is necessary and how it can be developed in order to overwhelm the destructive power which has reached infinity in our time. I believe that question falls right into the laps of businessmen. They are the ones who have the facilities and the situations required to work it out.

I have made an amateur study of freedom for a good many years, and have come to the conclusion that in order to approach truth and therefore freedom one has to take all the facts in any situation and apply to them the spiritual factor as outlined by Christ's life and work. That is an enormously powerful and significant freedom formula.

Mr. Speers is vice-president of James McCutcheon and Company, New York, N.Y.

During the war I was tossed into a situation in which I was asked to teach our department heads in a class in human relations and job relations. Never having done such a thing before, I didn't know how to go about it. I decided to use this freedom formula as a basis for going to work.

When I explained the formula to the department heads—and how I had arrived at it through study and experience—they took the bit in their teeth and ran away with it. They said: "We have always done a pretty good job of trying to increase the freedom of the customer by establishing her confidence in our ability to provide goods of finest quality, of the proper style, color, and so forth, and at a fair price, and added to her freedom by providing all kinds of extra services. We have also tried hard to treat our suppliers in the way we would like to be treated. The one thing we haven't considered enough is the freedom of those working under us."

We then went to work to examine each job in terms of the formula, getting all the facts and applying to them a sense of duty, justice, human understanding, mutual responsibility, and the like. The result of this evaluation required some changes in our operations and even called for some that economics would not allow at that time. But the most important thing it did was to give the department heads a brand new realization that the freedom of the people working under them was as much their responsibility as it was that of the people themselves. It brought about a remarkable change

in the atmosphere of the store.

Again, in the Laymen's Movement, we have found that a constructive atmosphere can be created by quiet prayer in which it is possible for men with diametrically opposed ideas to sit down together and think and plan for their own benefit and the benefit of the community as a whole.

To cite one more personal illustration: After twelve weeks of negotiation I was handed a strike notice by our union committee. Before they left my office I said, "We have all tried honestly and sincerely to find a fair solution. We haven't found it. Perhaps it is because our minds are not big enough and we need the help of someone who is vastly more capable than we are. Will you stop long enough to have a moment of silent prayer for a constructive solution." We were Catholics, Protestants, and Jews in the group.

It was the longest moment and the silentest silence I have ever experienced. Then they got up and went out. The next day mediation was agreed to by all concerned and we came out with a decent solution that was fair to all.

The simplicity of the Christian spirit of activated love set free by prayer is a magnificent power for good for everybody to use. The parallel lines of realism and idealism are reaching their contact point in our time. In a very real sense Christian businessmen are the new evangelists who by their study, experiment, and example can implement the new age of the spirit of God in man.

7. Nursing

By Eleanor M. Pise

Dr. Nelson's article, "Christian Vocation and Daily Work," has raised a number of questions about nurses and nursing as a Christian vocation. As a trained profession nursing is one of the youngest, less than a century old. Though Florence Nightingale developed nursing as a secular vocation, she strongly emphasized the religious motive and the early training schools did much to sustain the religious life of their nurses.

We know that some young women today enter schools of nursing with a conscious religious purpose, often with plans to go on into the mission field. But most of them are young (seventeen or eighteen years of age) and many do not remain in active nursing. The marriage rate is high for nurses, and other fields of work claim a few.

To some extent, students continue to link up their religious life with their nursing work. The student brings with her high ideals and great enthusiasm. Courses in sociology, psychology, ethics, and nursing tend to strengthen and encourage these. But nursing is very absorbing and as in other fields of work many things tend to change one's outlook and to distract one from old religious associations.

However, in no field of work is

there more opportunity for women to use their abilities to the full for the betterment of society than in nursing. Even when not actively practicing her profession, the nurse can give family and neighborhood service of inestimable value. Many nurses with true consecration apply Christian principles in giving their best to the work they are doing.

One of our aims should be that nurses grow into fine human beings and deepen their religious life as they go on in their professional careers. If this is not happening, then what are the reasons? Is nursing itself lacking? Are the conditions in nursing unfavorable to Christian living? Does the fault lie with the individuals and their general upbringing, or in our present-day culture? What, if anything, can be done to help such groups retain and develop their religious interests and aims, and at the same time broaden their sympathies and views?

Nurses are not unconscious of these things, and feel that it would be valuable to work with other groups in solving some of these problems. A reevaluation of ethical principles in the light of Christian teaching during the last year the student is in the school of nursing might reaffirm her faith as she becomes a graduate nurse. In the field of work there is no question that the opportunities are unlimited. How to make the best use of these and point them out to nurses themselves is another thing.

Miss Pise is chairman of the Committee on Religious Ministry to Nurses, Department of Pastoral Services, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A.

8. Teaching

By Wilson Lindsey

For a time and in some circles it seemed that, though it was permissible for a doctor to be an active Rotarian, an automobile salesman to be a Republican, and even for a bricklayer to be a Mason, a teacher should carefully avoid any behavior during working hours which might reveal that he had any religious conviction. This trend, though never reaching the scope of an opposite earlier one—when ministers were *sought* as teachers—was a definite one but it now seems to be on the wane. In fact, it may well be on its way out. We might even find it not improper to write of some ways in which a Christian teacher's Christian behavior is relevant to his professional behavior.

Most important of the teacher's relationships are those which directly involve children. I believe that the Christian teacher honestly and vigorously seeks to discover and help develop the good in all children. This means that child behavior is not bad just because it is annoying. It may represent the best efforts of the child to discover what is good.

It means that the work of a child from an influential home is not necessarily better than that of a less fortunate child. Nor does one child get a part in a play or a task in the classroom simply because he can perform better when another child

might have greater need for such experiences. I like to think that it was of a child with a dirty face and torn clothing that Christ said, ". . . for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven."

Christian teaching means that one child is not praised for accomplishments he finds easy while another is punished for failure which was almost certain. To the Christian teacher the wholesome and harmless boy-girl relationships of high school students are not something to make fun of, but are recognized as normal and valuable beginnings of the urge to do what we hope boys and girls will do much better than their parents have done—namely, to find a suitable marriage partner. The Christian teacher will be alert to the needs of those who do not make normal progress in this highly important task.

Another important area in which one's Christian profession should make itself evident is in his relationships with fellow teachers. The Christian teacher is a good faculty member, assuming his share of faculty assignments, not seeking favoritism, protecting fellow teachers from injustices, dignifying the profession, and striving to help others become better teachers as he himself strives to improve.

As one deals with a wide range of human nature in students, he also encounters a similar range in parents. All sincere parents deserve the respect and earnest help of the

Mr. Lindsey is a teacher in the eleventh grade core curriculum of the Oak Ridge (Tenn.) High School.

teacher as they try to understand their children better. Honesty tempered with kindness could be our guide. Many parents have ambitions for their children quite out of proportion to the abilities of the children. The Christian teacher will find help in his Christian faith as he helps such parents. He will sometimes need to protect the child from the selfish parent such as the one who kept his fourteen-year-old son out of school each Friday afternoon to drive a truck twenty-five miles to the city for supplies in a state where one cannot get even a learner's permit under the age of fifteen years and eleven months.

Finally, a Christian teacher may find himself in a dilemma in his relationships with superintendent and board members. In some areas it is no secret that teachers have been required to do strange things in order to obtain or hold a job. A Christian teacher will not pay for a job. He will not engage in illegal political activities for a candidate for office in order to obtain or hold a job. If asked to do such things, he will seek to expose those who try to involve him. If he says, "But I have to have a job!" then teaching is only a "job" for him—one which he has effectually separated from his Christian vocation.

Paul Hoffman Says —

The following excerpts are from Paul G. Hoffman's address on April 12 to the Church and Economic Life Conference in Pittsburgh.

The major responsibility for clearing up the misunderstandings between the United States and the new Asian democracies rests upon us; in part because we have had our full share in creating those misunderstandings; in part because we are the older brother with long experience in the ways of democracy, and also because of our financial and industrial strength. We can meet our responsibility only with words and deeds—better words and better deeds than have been employed up to now.

Our attitude toward these new nations should be sympathetic, understanding, not hypercritical. One positive need is the clarification of our attitude toward colonialism. The prestige of the United States was at a high point when we freed the Philippines but it has reached a new low because of what was thought to be our support of French colonialism. We must by every possible means make the Asian people and also the citizens of the new African nations understand that we are sympathetic with their determi-

nation to maintain their independence and keep themselves free from foreign domination.

Respect Due Other Nations

We must also accord these new nations the respect due sovereign nations. Our purpose must be not to make these new democracies into our own image and likeness but, as brothers practicing our highest sense of brotherhood, to help them achieve their own salvation, their own way, on the free side of the iron curtain. We must bury any lingering or fallacious notion that they are subversive, underprivileged, or inferior. They have achieved their independence and now properly claim a place among the world's nations.

We should also respect the right of the nations which wish to remain neutral to do so. We have lived with neutrals before and we have learned to respect and esteem them. Two examples which come readily to mind are Sweden and Switzerland. Not for a moment should we assume that those countries which are unwilling to join a military alliance with us are necessarily against us. We ourselves followed a neutralist policy for the first century and a half of our life as a nation and we were not judged unfriendly for so doing. You may recall the response that Prime Minister U Nu made to a critic of his country's neutrality. He said, "Perhaps you cannot un-

derstand it, but I am sure George Washington would have."

Patience and Confidence

Despite every discouragement we must attempt to promote a better understanding between the peoples and leaders of the free world and the communist world. We should not expect too much too soon, but perhaps in time the leaders of the communist world could be persuaded that we are not out to destroy them but we are willing to "live and let live."

I, for one, am willing to let the cold war simmer down to "competitive coexistence." I do not see how our free society can fail to win the competition if we apply ourselves boldly and vigorously. Communist doctrine teaches them that time is on their side; that capitalism, being rotten, will collapse of its own weight. But the truth is that Karl Marx was criticizing a dead society, the capitalism of 1848, that U.S. capitalism, 1956 style, is a more revolutionary thing than anything communism ever imagined and that it is their own vaunted system that is inefficient and cannot be made to work properly.

It is their system, not ours, that contains the seed of its own destruction. Time is on our side, not theirs. If we can keep winning the peace, it is their system that eventually will have to come our way because their own people will discover for themselves that theirs does not work well.

WORKSHOP

Edited by
Herman F. Reissig

Love and Busses

In Montgomery, Alabama, as almost everybody knows, Negro citizens are staying off the busses in protest against segregation rules. Speaking in a Birmingham Baptist Church early in March, one of the boycott leaders said something that sticks in my mind as one of the finest expressions of the spirit of Christian social action ever to come to my attention. It is, in fact, altogether superb. It hits the nail on the head. It is in the exact center of the bull's-eye. It is, if you will excuse one of the few Latin phrases I remember, *multum in parvo*. This, according to columnist Murray Kempton, is what the Negro minister said: "We're going to love everybody. And we're just going to stay off those busses." Have you heard a speaker who made you laugh, not because he tried to be funny but because he summed up a situation in words so exactly right that you just had to laugh? This seems to me to be such a statement. "We're going to love everybody. And we're just going to stay off those busses."

Some Christians are all for love, provided love doesn't involve anything but the softest kind of action. Especially, if you please, nothing that might offend anyone or include

any kind of coercion! Coercion, they say, is un-Christian. And, then, there are people who are quite ready to "put the screws on," hit the wrongdoer over the head, shout and shove and trample—all in the name of "justice." It is hard to detect much love in their aggressive action. But here, if you take it symbolically, is the right combination for the Christian. Not a mere soft sentiment without realistic action, and not a pugilistic kind of fighting without love, but: "WE'RE GOING TO LOVE EVERYBODY. AND WE'RE JUST GOING TO STAY OFF THOSE BUSES."

Revolution in Iowa

Yes sir! That's just about what it was! The Sioux Association of Congregational Christian Churches decided it had had enough of the conventional type of Association meeting. (They have been known to be a little on the dull side.) Some bright minds got together and planned

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something that was *not* dull. We're devoting quite a lot of space to this story, in the belief that maybe social action leadership could inject more life into other Associations. Thanks to Mace Crandall, minister of our church in Aurelia, for the following good job of reporting.

An Exciting Meeting

On the theory that one shot of penicillin is better than any number of aspirin tablets, the Sioux Association last fall decided to revamp its entire schedule and philosophy of fall and spring meetings. Instead of the usual variety program of speeches, with the people interested chiefly in dinner, the program committee set up a full day's seminar with everyone, down to the last man and woman, taking an active part.

Of the four departments of the Association, Social Action was asked to move the idea out of blueprints and onto the road. The enthusiastic reception accorded the venture indicates that it may be called successful.

Everything was reduced to essentials and aimed at full-crowd participation. Each dinner ticket was stamped with a number from 1 to 15, the estimate being that fifteen groups would accommodate the attendance, with about ten in a group. A short devotional service, arranged for congregational expression rather than homiletical impression, prepared the assembly for the address of the Rev. William Hastings, lately returned from Germany. Immediately after Mr. Hastings' report on the refugee and displaced persons problem, group leaders were introduced, their places of meeting assigned, and

everyone went to his group according to the number on his ticket.

The group leaders had been chosen weeks ahead and coached in the method and aim of the plan. Certain warnings and suggestions helped them point their groups toward the development of a concerted opinion. Each one tried to fit the subject into the given bent of his group—education, missions, women's work, or whatever seemed to be the main interest of the people meeting with him. Then he helped them think through the address *in terms of that interest*. He was a detonator, not a bomb.

Each group reduced its findings to one sentence, as concise and yet as comprehensive as possible. After forty-five minutes in the groups, the several clerks brought these findings to the chairman for the day who attempted to reduce them into a statement reflecting the entire body of opinion.

After lunch Miss Alice Huggins brought a stirring message from China of today and again the same groups met with the same leaders to take that message down into their several arenas of action at home. Again the clerks had the job of boiling down the group thinking and presenting a one-sentence finding to the chairman. This time everyone did much better.

For the final summary, the chairmen tried not only to bring together the groups' thinking on Miss Huggins' talk, but also to produce a well-rounded statement on the whole thinking of the whole assembly for the whole day. This summary was given to the Resolutions Committee

and contributed to the most incisive set of resolutions adopted by the Association in many years. Every person present felt as though he had been a part of something big and important, and he had. That the thinking was direct and often courageous is a tribute to the alert group leaders and to the people who took such spirited part in the enterprise.

The discussion groups presented the following summary of findings:

Summary of Findings

- I. Outreach.
 - A. We have left too much to the government.
 - B. Churches have been too self-centered.
 - C. Protestants have lagged in refugee work.
 - D. Churches should encourage more refugee sponsorships.
- II. Publicity—education.
 - A. Churches are mostly ignorant of real facts; rely on gossip.
 - B. Report this meeting to Pilgrim Fellowship, Women's Fellowship, Sunday School, men's clubs, *et al.*
 - C. We must all read everything we can find on the world situation.
 - D. Promote all valid agencies for relief: SOS, CARE, CROP, CWS, etc.
 - E. Utilize special Sundays for special emphases.
- III. Effective help.
 - A. Send less rummage and more goods.
 - B. Make personal contacts with refugees already here.
 - C. Invite them to church but

do not pressure them into it.

- D. Make ways for children to help; let them send *their own* clothing.
 - E. Contribute to relief organizations (such as those listed above).
 - F. Ask the government to extend the Refugee Act.
- IV. Satisfactory experience.
 - A. Spencer and Sioux City report excellent results with sponsorships.
 - B. Emphasize the positive good; refute untruths.
 - V. Responsibility.
 - A. Rests primarily on each local fellowship and through them the nation.
 - B. National: we failed to prevent the world debacle.
 - C. We recognize human solidarity; we *are* brothers to all.
 - D. The need is getting greater all the time.

Resolution Adopted by the Sioux Association

WHEREAS, the so-called Christian nations have not been able to prevent the present crisis in international affairs, and

WHEREAS, this crisis has produced the tragedy of the refugee and of displaced persons,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: That we, confessing our share in the blame for this situation, do all in our power

A. To inform ourselves as to the needs and opportunities for helping all distressed persons, reporting this meeting to all departments of the local church, observing days of special emphasis as appointed, and pro-

moting all valid agencies which are striving to meet the world crisis with a truly Christian witness and help;

B. Instead of leaving so much to government while we pursue our self-centered objectives, to take responsibility for sponsorships, relief and assimilation of war-sufferers, acknowledging our personal and group obligation to them;

C. To make our efforts more effective by more generous and discriminating giving, by establishing warm, personal relationships with those refugees already in our midst, and by asking government to extend the Refugee Act which expires next June;

D. To strengthen our Christian program of youth work in our churches, to face the facts of the present tension realistically and labor more sacrificially and prayerfully to bring about a Christian solution;

E. To reaffirm our faith in the Christian mission and to strengthen the hands of our Chinese brethren who live in unwilling bondage.

Memo from Weaver's Office

A memorandum on bills affecting Indian Americans has been prepared by Galen R. Weaver. This covers some of the more important legislation before the second session of the Eighty-fourth Congress. Single copy free on request. Additional copies 5 cents. 289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N.Y.

Please Keep It Up

Our file of materials for possible use in WORKSHOP gets fatter by the month. We're delighted. Unfortunately, only a small part of what is

sent in can be used. (Reasons of space.) But please don't stop! We very much want stories of what your committee or your church is doing. Let's try a little alliteration and say that if your story doesn't wow *Workshop* (readers), it may nevertheless stimulate the staff.

Framingham, La Foret, New York

Some of you have come to look forward to the zestful days at the summer Social Action Institutes and at the annual World Order and U.N. Seminar. Here, then, is advance notice—for yourself and for those whom you will persuade to attend. (You will do some enthusiastic persuading, won't you?) The annual Framingham institute, July 24-28. Among the leaders: Ray Gibbons, Fern Babcock, Galen Weaver. R. H. Edwin Espy of the National Council of Churches staff. The Mid-West Institute at La Foret, Colorado, September 4-8. Among the leaders: Gibbons, Albert Rasmussen, Francis McPeck, Babcock, Weaver, Reissig. The annual World Order and U.N. Seminar, October 15-17, in New York City.

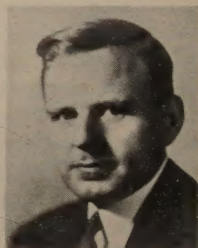
Sioux City, Chicago, Nashville

For information on the following opportunities write to Galen Weaver, 287 Fourth Avenue, New York, N.Y. July 6-18: Guided tour of Indian American life, Chicago to Sioux City. July 30—August 3: Eighth Interdenominational Institute of Racial and Cultural Relations, Chicago, Illinois. July 2-14: Thirteenth annual Race Relations Institute, presented by the American Missionary Association, Fisk University, Nashville, Tennessee.

TWO SOCIAL ACTION INSTITUTES

If you are concerned about the responsibility of the church for social action you are invited to join with others in seeking deeper understanding of our task at the Framingham or La Foret Social Action Institute.

Dr. R. H. Edwin Espy will give a series of four addresses on "The Christian Basis for Action in Society" at both Institutes. He is Associate Executive Secretary of the Division of Christian Life and Work of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. The program at both Institutes will explore the four program emphases of the CSA: "Racial Integration in the Churches and in Housing"; "America's Responsibility in the Contemporary World"; "The Church and Social Welfare"; and "Christian Faith and Freedom."



FRAMINGHAM SOCIAL ACTION INSTITUTE

- PLACE:** Congregational Center, Framingham Center, Massachusetts.
- DATES:** July 24-28, 1956.
- COST:** Room, board, and registration fee, \$22.00.
- LEADERS:** Dr. Espy, Dr. Kenneth Maxwell, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Webb; and three members of the CSA staff: Dr. Ray Gibbons, Miss Fern Babcock, and the Rev. Galen R. Weaver.

LA FORET SOCIAL ACTION INSTITUTE

- PLACE:** La Foret, near Colorado Springs, Colorado.
- DATES:** September 4-8, 1956.
- COST:** Room, board, and registration fee, \$20.00.
- LEADERS:** Dr. Espy, Dr. Albert T. Rasmussen, Mr. Francis McPeck; and four members of the CSA staff: Dr. Ray Gibbons, Miss Fern Babcock, the Rev. Herman F. Reissig, and the Rev. Galen R. Weaver.